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Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2013 12:03 PM
To: AppropriationTestimony; colin.milne@ct.gov
Cc: idellabro1@aol.com
Subject: (no subject)

Hello my name is Idella Kelsey-Bullock,

I am writing this to tell you about how the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities have help my son. My son name is Michael Green-Kelsey. He is a tenth grader at Central High School in Bridgeport CT. He is a **First Honors** student with hopes of attending Harvard when he graduates in two years. My problem began in November of 2011 when my family moved to Connecticut. We came from Pennsylvania with high hopes. I enrolled him into Central High school a little confused because I was informed Michael had to go to Central because it was the only wheelchair accessible high school in Bridgeport. I gathered all my sons information from Pennsylvania and went to enroll him. Michael came from Pa. with an IEP that addressed his physical disabilities and reading comprehension issues. Michael has always been in general education classes and was a 3.25 GPA honor roll student. My first issue was because he had a IEP they informed me he would have to go into Special Education classes. I refused. After they finally looked over his records and test scores from Pa., they decided he wasn't eligible for an IEP and had to have a 504 Plan. At that time I agreed to the to the plan. I was constantly calling the school and requesting meetings to discuss issues such as transportation to school for Michael, missing classes and being marked as cutting because the schools one elevator was out of service, to a teacher ignoring that he is in a wheelchair by requesting that he leave his work to be turned in on his desk. The teachers desk was up on a podium with steps. My once outgoing child was quickly disappearing into a shell. By the end of the year my son, whom I was told passed all of his classes went from a A/B student to a student who failed classes. Needless to say I was outraged. I was told a PPT meeting would be held at the start of school to address all my concerns. When the school year began in September 2012 the staff had been reassigned and Michael once again was left out in the cold. Once again he had no transportation to get to school. I was told many untruths, starting with a bus couldn't get down the street. When I reminded them they managed the year before, I was yelled at and was told I was going to do what they said or Michael wasn't going to get picked up. I finally had enough and lost my temper. I informed them Michael wasn't going to meet them on the corner unless they agreed to repair his very expensive electric wheelchair if it was damaged in any way. They refused. I then informed them I would not be sending Michael out and for them to find a way to get Michael to school and that their time to do so was limited. They ignored me. Finally after three weeks of them refusing to pick Michael up I started taking him myself. This cause me a lot of pain. I am disabled myself and the act of carrying Michael to the car, loading his wheelchair and then going in reverse when we got to his school caused me pain and I had to double up on my pain medication to make it through the day. Finally my body just couldn't take it and someone who does not want to be named gave me the number to Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities. I met with a wonderful lawyer named Colin Milne. Once the school was notified I had obtained a lawyer I had transportation by the end of the week. I do not use the school districts transportation. The Resource Disabilities Network was hired privately for Michael's transportation. With Mr. Milne's help Michael received testing to determine whether he needed an IEP or a 504 Plan. Michael's grades from the previous year was reevaluated and it was found that they included time that Michael was not enrolled in their school. The grades where corrected. His class schedule was redone, keeping Michael on the first floor for most classes. He was given a 1 on 1 Para-professional who stays with him all day. While Michael is happier he still wants to go to another school that he feels would be better equipped to meet his education goals. We still have many strides to go. Such as an online French class the school promised at our first meeting, which to date has not happened. Once again leaving Michael behind in non-English Language needed for college. But I feel with all my heart that Mr. Milne will help Michael with that also. Mr. Milne has been their for Michael and my son who was withdrawn has opened up. Michael has recently told me to show Mr. Milne his grades so that Mr. Milne knows he is working hard. Please give the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities the resources it needs to continue helping children like my son receive a education worthy of college and an environment that is also safe to learn in.

Thank You,
Idella Kelsey-Bullock